

Are Trends Still Relevant?

By: Beth Jones

When September rolls around many think of summer ending and school beginning, but in the fashion world only one thing is on the mind of every editor, blogger and fashion enthusiast, Fashion Week is here. This is the time that New York, London, Paris and Milan showcase their top designers and everyone involved begins to prepare for the next season's trends, or do they?

Up until 10 years ago, Fashion Week was an elite event. The top magazine editors, stylists and buyers converged on the major fashion cities, watched the shows and then would gather to discuss and formulate the trend stories that would direct the upcoming season's shop windows and advertisements. They were the leaders, and we were the followers. We pawed through their magazines, peered in their curated windows and decided that if the mannequins were wearing pencil skirts and bowtie blouses, so were we.

This was 10 years ago, and a lot has changed since then. Fashion Week has been opened up to anyone and everyone who has a television, or most important, a computer screen. The Internet has taken the secrets of fashion week and exposed them to all with a desire to see and hear. Shows are livecast, bloggers are sitting front row snapping Instagram photos, and editors are tweeting thoughts in live time. Sarah in Dallas and Rachel in Phoenix now instantly know what's on the runways and can decide for themselves what they like and don't like. They have become their own editor.

It is not only the runway that is open to the public, but also everything that surrounds the month of fashion. The street style of everyone attending has become a highlight and must-watch for anyone interested. On the streets we get to see a personal take on the latest styles and pick and choose what to be inspired by. Bloggers and social media powerhouses are updating their networks with fashion week coverage, but spinning it to reflect their current tastes and opinions. Sarah in Dallas may love a specific blogger and after seeing what she's wearing, instantly head to the stores to find something similar.

With all this change, have trends truly become non-relevant or do they still have a place in the market? Ruth La Ferla, a reporter for the New York Times, maintains that trends are still relevant for many who follow fashion, but consumers do not seem to be following the edicts that department stores and top-level fashion magazines give; instead, they base their shopping decisions directly from the runway, the Internet, and the streets.

Trends are not a thing of the past, but the way that they are decided and dictated to the masses has changed. Connie Wang, global editor at [Refinery 29](#), says that the new "trend reporting" means that instead of bringing a clipping from *Vogue* to Bergdorf and buying the skirt suit shown on the page, we're spotting the Prada

brocade suit while watching the livestream of a show...only to find a vintage Prada dress with a similar brocade print to pair with a new pair of Zara brocade pants we picked up on the weekend, and save up for a Prada brooch to pin on our new ensemble”.

In other words, trends have moved from being constrictive to more personal and creative. It's a new exciting world of trends that allows the consumer to pick and choose, be selective and make decisions based on personal taste. A change for the better.. *I think!*

Reference:

<http://www.refinery29.com/trend-reports>

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/23/fashion/in-fashion-are-trends-passe.html?pagewanted=all>